

## VOICE YOUR OPINION

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### Spoken Testimony

At the public hearing, the Plan Commission President will call on members of the public who wish to speak to the Commission. This opportunity to hear from the public and ask questions is an essential part of the work of the Commission. Spoken testimony is summarized in the meeting minutes, and along with the written testimony, becomes part of the official record of the proceedings. (See "Citizens Speak Up!" pamphlet.)

### Written Testimony

If your written statement is delivered to the Dept. of Community Services or to the Plan Commission Secretary at least 5 days prior to the meeting and prior to the preparation of the Department Report, the City will duplicate your statement and distribute a copy to each Plan Commission member before the hearing. Commission members have often commented that this form of testimony is very effective because they have time to think about what you have said. You can also give written testimonies to the Plan Commission at the public hearing, although Commission members seldom have time to review and assess this information before taking action.

**Note:** This guide is for general information purposes only. For more specific information, please consult the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure and the Carmel Zoning Ordinance.

### Contact With Individual Commission Members

It is not proper to contact individual Commission members; it may be perceived as swaying a vote. Citizens who wish to present their views orally on a specific land use issue are restricted to testifying at the public hearing. Written testimony must be submitted at least 5 days prior or during the public hearing.

### Background Materials

Usually, the City's Planning/Zoning staff at the Department of Community Services will have prepared a written report, entitled the *Department Report*, for the Plan Commission on each of the agenda items. Members of the public may obtain copies of the Department Report at the Department of Community Services, Third Floor, Carmel City Hall.

The Department of Community Services keeps written minutes and audio tape recordings of all Plan Commission meetings. These are available to the public upon written request or through the City web site accessed at [www.carmel.in.gov](http://www.carmel.in.gov).

## CARMEL PLAN COMMISSION



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# ABOUT THE PLAN COMMISSION

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## Purpose

The City of Carmel established the Plan Commission to help plan for orderly growth and development of the City and Township. Its charge includes helping the City Council develop and update City Ordinances, the Comprehensive Plan, the Thoroughfare Plan, and other long-range plans for housing, transportation, neighborhood development, parks, commercial development, and public facilities.

## Membership

The Plan Commission has 11 voting members; five members are appointed by the Mayor for a term of four years and two members are appointed by the Hamilton County Commissioners. There is also an appointment for a one year term by the Carmel Parks & Recreation Board, the City Engineer, City Council, and Board of Public Works.

## Land Use Matters Heard

- Primary Plat and Subdivision Waivers
- Plat Vacation
- Amendment of Zoning or Subdivision Ordinances
- Development Plan
- Rezone or Planned Unit Development
- Amendment of Comprehensive Plan
- Site Plan, Architectural Design, Landscape, Lighting, Signage
- HPR and Condominium plats

## Meetings

All meetings of the Plan Commission are open to the public, with the exception of Executive Committee meetings held strictly for administrative purposes.

**Public hearings** are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers in City Hall. The Plan Commission listens to opinions and arguments from citizens who are interested in items on the Commission's agenda. At public hearings, input from the public is invited in the form of written or spoken testimony, which become part of the official record on the issues being considered (see the pamphlet entitled "Citizens Speak Up!"). All speakers are respected while giving his/her opinions, and they are expected to do the same when the petitioners, Department staff, or Commission members are speaking.

At the conclusion of a public hearing, the Commission most often will refer the petition to Committee for review and resolution of issues. The Committee, in return, recommends action back to the full Commission. The Commission may leave the public hearing open for another session for clarification of certain issues. Occasionally, when there are no issues, they will immediately vote a decision on the petition after suspension of the Rules of Procedure.

**Committee Meetings**, Subdivision and Special Studies, are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM in the Caucus Rooms in City Hall. The Public is welcome to attend these meetings, however, the purpose of these

meetings is for in-depth review of the issues brought forth in the prior public hearing, negotiation, and formulation of a recommendation to the full Plan Commission. Therefore, the public is generally not invited to speak. Only under exceptional circumstances will the committee vote to accept public input of new issues to insure proper assessment of the petition. Special sessions may be held from time to time.

## More Information

This pamphlet was prepared by the Department of Community Services of the City of Carmel, Indiana in order to provide you basic information about the Carmel Plan Commission. If you would like more information about these types of issues heard by the Commission, there are general information sheets on the specific land use and appeals processes available at the Department of Community Services office or online at [www.carmel.in.gov](http://www.carmel.in.gov).

For more information regarding process and procedure of the Carmel Plan Commission, refer to the Rules of Procedure, available at the Department of Community Services or online at [www.carmel.in.gov](http://www.carmel.in.gov).

For more information on how to testify to the Plan Commission, see the pamphlet entitled "Citizens Speak Up!"

For more information about land use planning in Carmel and Clay Township, see other pamphlets in this series available at City Hall, One Civic Square, Carmel, IN, call the Department of Community Services at 317.571.2417 or visit the City's web site at [www.carmel.in.gov](http://www.carmel.in.gov).

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